

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 036923 TOSEC 020084  
ORIGIN MCT-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 PC-01 SS-15 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSC-05  
NSCE-00 SY-05 USSS-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 AID-05  
PA-01 PRS-01 H-01 L-03 SCA-01 DODE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00  
SCS-03 /056 R

DRAFTED BY CTF:RFINCH/M/CT:LDHECK:DR  
APPROVED BY M/CT:LDHECK  
ARA - MR. LUERS  
PC - MR. STEVE SMITH (SUBS)  
ARA/AND:MR. COX (DRAFT)  
PC - DBRINKMAN (DRAFT)  
S/S- MR. SEBASTIAN  
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION  
PEACE CORPS

-----172216 083995 /70  
O 172138Z FEB 77 ZFF5  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE  
INFO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 036923 TOSEC 020084

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OINS, ASEC, CASC, CO

SUBJECT: COLOMBIA - PEACE CORPS KIDNAPPING

REF: STATE 034896

1. SUMMARY: COLOMBIA TASK FORCE (TF) MET FEBRUARY 16 TO  
DISCUSS STRATEGY AND TACTICS ON BASIS OF AVAILABLE INFORMA-  
TION AND ACCUMULATED EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH SIMILAR  
KIDNAPPINGS. TF SOLICITS EMBASSY VIEWS. END SUMMARY.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 036923 TOSEC 020084

2. TF DIRECTOR REVIEWED SITUATION NOTING THAT WE ARE  
REASONABLY WELL INFORMED ABOUT FARC AND THEIR METHODS  
OF OPERATION, PARTIALLY AS RESULT OF DEBRIEFING OF LEUPIN,  
HONORARY DUTCH CONSUL WHO WAS HELD BY GROUP FOR 20 MONTHS.  
KIDNAPPERS ARE MOBILE, WELL ARMED, DETERMINED GROUP WHO  
MAY NOW REMAIN OUT OF CONTACT FOR INDEFINITE PERIOD BASED  
ON KNOWN PAST ACTIONS. OF THREE PREVIOUS ABDUCTION

CASES WITH WHICH WE FAMILIAR, FARC DEMANDED RANSOM IN ALL THREE CASES, REDUCED ITS DEMANDS TO RELATIVELY REASONABLE PROPORTIONS OVER PERIOD OF TIME, EVENTUALLY RELEASED TWO OF HOSTAGES WHEN RANSOM PAID AND KILLED THIRD WHEN RANSOM REFUSED. IN SHORT, THIS COULD BE LONG AND TOUGH ONE AND GIVEN TERRAIN IN WHICH INCIDENT TOOK PLACE, WE MAY NOT HEAR FROM TERRORISTS OR RECEIVE THEIR DEMANDS FOR SOME TIME.

3. FOR BENEFIT ALL TASK FORCE MEMBERS, TF DIRECTOR REVIEWED US POLICY DURING ABDUCTION OF AMERICANS ABROAD AS SET FORTH IN STATE 283548, DECEMBER 2, 1975 AND REPEATED FEBRUARY 15 TO BOGOTA. THIS POLICY REMAINS IN EFFECT.

4. LOOKING AHEAD TOWARD DAY WHEN TERRORISTS SUBMIT DEMANDS OR OTHERWISE ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION WITH GOC, EMBASSY, OR SOME THIRD PARTY, AND WE FIND OURSELVES MOVING INTO DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH TERRORISTS, QUESTION ARISES WHO SHOULD APPEAR TO BE ACTING ON BEHALF OF USG, GIVEN VARIOUS AUDIENCES (FARC, GOC, US CONGRESS AND PUBLIC AND PCV'S FAMILY) WE MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT. TASK FORCE CONSIDERED THIS IMPORTANT FACTOR WHICH COULD HAVE BEARING ON (A) TREATMENT OF VICTIM; (B) ATTITUDE OF KIDNAPPERS TOWARD RANSOM DEMANDS OR EARLY RELEASE; AND (C) DAMPENING ALLEGATIONS OF CIA CONNECTIONS; AND, COULD EVENTUALLY BE USEFUL TO ENLIST THIRD PARTIES WHO MAY BE MOVED TO INFLUENCE KIDNAPPERS TO RELEASE VICTIM IN ACCEPTABLE  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 036923 TOSEC 020084

FASHION. DECISION REACHED THAT PEACE CORPS SHOULD APPEAR TO BE OUT FRONT IN WASHINGTON AND, SUBJECT TO EMBASSY'S VIEWS, IN COLOMBIA ALSO. EMBASSY WOULD OF COURSE CONTINUE DEAL WITH GOC.

5. LACK OF DEMANDS BY FARC OR EVEN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF ABDUCTION AS YET, PLUS STARR'S ILLNESS WHICH MAY INHIBIT FARC'S MOBILITY COULD PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EARLY INITIATIVE TO INFLUENCE KIDNAPPERS TO RELEASE VICTIM BEFORE THEY ARE PUBLICLY COMMITTED TO A HOSTAGE AND RANSOM NEGOTIATION SITUATION. TF AGREED THAT PUBLIC APPEALS FROM REPUTABLE ORGANIZATIONS OR FAMILY NOT CALLED FOR AT THIS POINT BUT SHOULD BE HELD FOR USE AT RIGHT TACTICAL MOMENT IN FUTURE. HOWEVER, TF BELIEVES PRIVATE MESSAGE TO FARC AT PRESENT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED THROUGH ANY AVAILABLE CHANNEL. EMBASSY'S VIEWS REQUESTED ON WHETHER FARC RESPONSIVE TO COLOMBIAN COMMUNIST PARTY OR ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION AND, IF SO, WHETHER MESSAGE TO FARC THROUGH

SUCH GROUP AND FROM EMBASSY, GOC, OR RESPECTED COLOMBIAN FIGURE MIGHT BE PURSUED. OUR PRESUMPTION AT PRESENT IS THAT WE WOULD INFORM AND SEEK CONCURRENCE OF GOC FOR ANY SUCH APPROACH. MESSAGE COULD STRESS STARR'S WORK AS PCV, HIS STRICTLY NON-POLITICAL ROLE, HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS (INCLUDING HIS ILLNESS) AND ADVERSE IMAGE OR PUBLICITY ABOUT FARC FOR ITS CONTINUED DETENTION OF YOUNG INNOCENT VOLUNTEER ENGAGED IN SCIENTIFIC WORK FOR COLOMBIA.

6. TF DIRECTOR NOTED THAT VOLUNTEER'S MOTHER WAS NATURALLY DISTRAUGHT AND THREATENED CALL IN PRESS TO MAKE PUBLIC APPEAL AND/OR VISIT BOGOTA. ALTHOUGH ULTIMATE DECISION IS HERS, IT WAS AGREED WE SHOULD ATTEMPT DISSUADE HER FROM SUCH ACTION AT THIS TIME, PARTIALLY BY KEEPING IN CLOSE AND REGULAR CONTACT WITH HER AND BUILDING UP HER CONFIDENCE IN TF'S CONCERN FOR HER AND HER  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 036923 TOSEC 020084

SON.

7. TF NOTED THAT COLOMBIAN ARMED FORCES WERE SEARCHING FOR FARC AND STARR. ON BASIS PAST RECORD OF CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN FARC AND MILITARY LEADING TO SHOOTING AND KILLING, CONCERN WAS EXPRESSED THAT MILITARY OVER-REACTION MIGHT ENDANGER STARR'S LIFE.

8. TF BELIEVES WE SHOULD MAKE MOST OF ANTICIPATED PERIOD OF KIDNAPPER SILENCE TO PREPARE OURSELVES TO MOVE EXPEDITIOUSLY TO INFLUENCE KIDNAPPERS' ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER THEY HAVE MADE THEMSELVES KNOWN.

9. IN ADDITION TO EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON MATTERS IN PARA 5 ABOVE, TASK FORCE WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S CONSIDERED COMMENTS ON FOLLOWING:

(A) PROS AND CONS OF PRIVATE VERSUS PUBLIC EFFORTS TO INFORM AND INFLUENCE KIDNAPPERS;

(B) IDENTITY OF POSSIBLE THIRD-PARTY CHANNELS TO KIDNAPPERS, HOW THEY MIGHT BEST BE APPROACHED, WHETHER COLOMBIAN COMMUNIST PARTY IS A VIABLE CANDIDATE FOR SUCH A ROLE, AND WHETHER EMBASSY OR GOC HAVE CHANNELS OR OTHER ASSETS FOR SUCH APPROACH;

(C) RELEVANT FACTORS IN LOCAL TACTICAL SITUATION BEARING ON ABOVE INCLUDING NATURE OF COMMUNIST PARTY-FARC RELATIONSHIP, AND WHETHER PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS OUTSIDE COLOMBIA COULD USEFULLY BE STIMULATED TO CREATE

HUMANITARIAN PRESSURES ON KIDNAPPERS, FARC, AND  
COMMUNIST PARTY THROUGH COUNTER-PARTS IN COLOMBIA.

HARTMAN

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** KIDNAPPING  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 17-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977STATE036923  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** RFINCH/M/CT:LDHECK:DR  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770057-0732  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770230/aaaabast.tel  
**Line Count:** 173  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 3e9017c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ORIGIN MCT  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 77 STATE 34896  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 04-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3292311  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** COLOMBIA - PEACE CORPS KIDNAPPING  
**TAGS:** PINS, ASEC, CASC, CO, US, (STARR, RICHARD C)  
**To:** BOGOTA  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/3e9017c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009